

EXHIBIT HHH

From: Walls, Levi <LeviWalls@my.unt.edu>
Date: Sun, Nov 17, 2019 at 5:52 PM
Subject: Re: [EXT] Re: Meeting
To: Timothy Jackson <shermanzelechin@gmail.com>

Dear Dr. Jackson,

After watching Ewell's presentation, I wanted to share some of my thoughts with you. I am sympathetic to his views, but I also have important disagreements. I am inclined to be against the main points of his paper, but I also take issue with some of the criticisms I have heard, especially in regard to *tone*. And, of course, the tone of discourse is very important in these political discussions.

This particular paper comes at an interesting time for me. On a personal note, I'm very sympathetic to desires for increased diversity for a few reasons. My wife and her family (which I am infinitely closer to than my own, who I'm estranged from) have been the targets of racism; we're also having a daughter very soon who will be mixed-race; **and I personally carry an extraordinary amount of white guilt and disgust for the state of my own country's politics.** Despite these caveats, and the fact that Ewell and I obviously share *political* views, I find some of his points to be extremely suspect:

1. **Schenker's racist ideologies cannot be divorced from his analytical methods *because he believed these views to be central to his theories*:** I find this point to be problematic and a little naïve. The suggestion is that Schenkerians of today are objectively incorrect in separating Schenker's politics from his theories simply because Schenker asserted that they were connected. In other words, if Schenker said it, it must be true. The argument is based on the somewhat unthoughtful idea that the stated intentions of creators are utterly indisputable. Of course Schenker said his theories are undivorceable from his politics! This was a fashionable statement of the time, and the exact same thing was said by Lorenz. Brinkmann took Lorenz at his word and came to the conclusion that Lorenz's desire to have every part of a piece serve a governing whole was totalitarian; McClatchie also argued that Lorenz's politics and theories could not be separated, though he does it far more responsibly by refusing to leave Lorenz's ideas unexamined. The fact of the matter is that Schenkerians today regularly violate Schenker's original intentions for voice-leading analysis (mixing it with Weberian RN analysis including applied chords, using it for non-absolute music, and, indeed, music by non-Germans and non-whites). The suggestion that we are forced to think a particular way because Schenker did does not hold up to scrutiny.
2. **Hierarchical analysis—in which certain musical elements exert power over others—supports white power structures:** I find it very difficult to swallow this claim. Structure of any kind is almost nonexistent without some form of hierarchy. I can see how it would be problematic if we were to suggest the following: the power structures of society map directly onto music; therefore, just as tonic is the governing sonority in tonal music,

the white race is *rightfully* the master of the lesser races. Ewell persuasively shows that *Schenker* may have thought this way, but (like in my first point) it does not mean that we have no choice but to throw up our hands and say “hierarchical analysis is inherently racist!”. If hierarchy is racist, we would also have to accept the idea that, say, the Fibonacci sequence is racist. The racist thing would be to claim that race does or should mirror this hierarchy.

But I also take issue with the *tone* of the responses. Race and gender are amazingly touchy issues because those in the privileged group have conditioned responses that cause them to become defensive. These responses often manifest themselves through sarcasm, strawman arguments, and condescension. For instance:

1. **The very first comment is troubling:** “The talks at the plenary were demoralizing.” Not Ewell’s lecture specifically, but the plenary *in general*. Since the talks at the plenary were focused on issues of diversity, I find this first comment to be highly problematic. Granted, I’ve only seen Ewell’s talk so I can’t speak to the content of the other papers; however, papers on issues in diversity are categorical failures if they do nothing to challenge the status-quo, which is something that I can see being “demoralizing” to those within privileged groups. I would also feel demoralized in the plenary, but with the understanding that these demoralizations serve to break me out of my racially/socially conditioned bubble. It’s incredibly unpleasant to acknowledge our implicit biases, but it’s important as well lest we go through life believing ourselves to be the center of the universe. Also, the statement that they “didn’t expect much” from his talk seems needlessly vicious toward a fellow scholar.
2. **The suggestion that Ewell pushed Schenkerianism as “the root of all white racism” is a mischaracterization, the aims of which seem to be to make his paper seem more ridiculous.** Obviously, white racism has existed for far longer than Schenkerianism. This person seems to be letting their anger get the better of them.
3. **While it is odd that Ewell completely glossed over Schenker’s Jewish identity, I worry that the commenter is suggesting some sort of mutual exclusivity between Jewishness and racism.** I may merely be misinterpreting their argument here, but obviously any person of any race or ethnicity has the potential to have racist views. If we accept the undeniable conclusion that Schenker had racist views, it doesn’t really make sense to let him off the hook simply because he faced his own prejudices. In fact, it makes it even worse, in a way! Of course, as I already expressed, I take issue with the projection of these views into Schenkerian analysis in general.
4. **Although I don’t necessarily disagree with the second commentator, I find their tone extremely unprofessional.** The sarcastic comment that Ewell doesn’t find the study of music important is quite condescending. And, while they may be right to point out the contradiction in Ewell’s focus on Russian music theory, the way in which it was done did not do them credit.

Overall, I think that Ewell’s talk is asking us to be more introspective, and to approach culturally received truths with skepticism. I find this practice to be very healthy (in theory), especially for those within the privileged classes. Just like the deconstructions of philosophers like Foucault and those within the Frankfurt School, these skepticisms are important tools for examining the hallowed truths of the world; like these philosophers, Ewell also goes too far in some of his points. Yet, I do not think Ewell wants to throw out *any* methodologies. If he does, he’s clearly a fool; but I don’t think that’s his aim (as some have led me to believe). Above all, I think Ewell is advocating for increased transparency in how we teach music theory. I agree that nothing is apolitical, and it’s important to offer our students the whole story. But never at the expense of repertoire, methodologies, or any form of knowledge. These things should never be sacrificed for any reason!

Let me know what you think! I’d like to hear your opinions on these matters, even if they may be different from my own (although I anticipate that we will agree on several points).

Kind regards,

Levi

From: Timothy Jackson <shermanzelechin@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 16, 2019 5:55 PM
To: Walls, Levi <LeviWalls@my.unt.edu>
Subject: [EXT] Re: Meeting

Dear Levi,

I presume that you are referring to Ewell's talk. I have not watched it yet because I suppose that I will find it difficult to put up with. In any event, perhaps a response in the JSS will be warranted.

I sent this note to other Schenkerian colleagues at UNT:

Dear Schenkerian colleagues,

Not everyone who attended the SMT was enthusiastic about Ewell's talk. I forward a comment I received today from a colleague with some Schenkerian chops:

"The talks at the plenary were demoralizing. I didn't really expect that much, but Philip Ewell's vitriolic attack on Schenkerism as the root of all white racism was disgusting.

He received a standing ovation. They need to read Richard Kramer's *Spectrum* review of the collection of Schenker's correspondence.

It's nice that Ewell cynically discussed intellectual anti-Semitism at the end of his talk, **without mentioning once that Schenker was a Jew, that all of his Jewish disciples had to flee, that those who did not were murdered by the Nazis (including Schenker's wife and most talented students, i.e., Angelika Elias) and that they were hated here when they arrived.** Instead, he accused them of institutionalizing racism in music theory, *precisely* because all of them abhor Schenker's political ideas."

I place in bold type some of the concerning comments.

When I was a student at CUNY, Saul Novack arranged for me to meet privately with Felix Salzer, who had recently retired from teaching because of the onset of dementia. Fortunately, when I visited him in his apartment, he was still almost completely lucid, and I spent the better part of a day just listening to him reminisce about his Vienna years, immigration to the US, studying with Schenker himself in the last year of his life. Later, after Salzer's death, I also met with his wife and had several long conversations with her about related topics. It is a pity that I did not record these discussions. During our conversation, Hans Weisse did not come up. However, I did discuss the topic of anti-Semitism with Weisse's daughter, who died some years ago, and that time I DID videotape the conversation. I need to dig out the tape and digitize it.

The fact of Schenker's Jewishness, and that of most of his students, came up repeatedly in all of these conversations in different contexts. It is of central importance to understanding the reception of Schenkerian Analysis first in Europe, in the period of the rise of Nazism, and then in early post-war America.

I need to listen to Ewell's talk before reacting. However, if it is indeed true that he does not mention Schenker's own Jewish identity, that raises questions.

This comment also came:

I have known about Schenker's repugnant political views for fifty years. At the time, Schenker's ideas about music were mostly inaccessible; Ernst Oster's translation of *Der*

freie Satz was not published until 1979, and there were few advocates of Schenker in American universities. There was no point in discussing Schenker's politics.

Schenker eventually became fashionable, but in a way that was not surprising—as William Rothstein said in 1985 at the Mannes Schenker conference —he was “Americanized.” His musical theories were transformed into “Schenkerian analysis,” and what Rothstein described humorously as “Schenker-flavored” techniques.

Ewell said that Schenker is the dominant music theorist in American university theory programs: “Schenker is our shared model, whether we study tonal music, popular music, or post-tonal music.” (2:23) Would Schenker have recognized the uses to which his theories have been put? Of course not; he would have rejected out of hand almost all of what passes for discussion of his ideas. Just think: Schenker as analyst of pop and atonal music.

To simplify: *The Jews are our misfortune.*

To summarize, Wittgenstein and Schenker participated in the same intellectual culture; eventually Wittgenstein was able to work through these problems in a more intelligent manner.

Ewell also dropped Kant's name in his discussion of intellectual anti-Semitism. This is a real problem, but it's important to note that Schenker's artistic elitism was a response to Kant's concept of the sublime [and NOT an expression of bigotry of any kind]. Aside from Kant's central position in German culture, he was an extraordinarily important figure for acculturated German Jews during the nineteenth century; plenty has been written about that.

Since politics is so important for the “new music theory,” theory programs should require one semester of modern European history, and one semester of modern Jewish history. They could, of course, have students study music as well - if they think it's really necessary.

Ewell's conclusions: Schenker's concepts of scale degrees and dissonance resolution is inherently racist. [*To study voice leading is racist*] (2:30) Study of Schenker's musical ideas has helped to legitimize harmful stereotypes about blacks and other people of color. (2:32) “Diversity” is a cynical strategy to reinforce inequality. (2:32) Reduce the study of Western music theory to two semesters (this would certainly solve a lot of problems, because then no one would even be able to attempt to study Schenker's ideas, which is apparently the point). (2:34) Scrap the German requirement for graduate students (ditto). (2:34)

If we critique the history of Western music, we will quickly find that almost everyone is guilty of virulent anti-Semitism and probably racism as well, not just Wagner. That doesn't mean that we should stop studying music.

What I would like to know is how Ewell's advocacy of Russian music theory—product of an anti-democratic and deeply prejudiced culture—helps to negate music theory's “white racial frame.” In my opinion, it just reinforces it. Other than Stravinsky, and, perhaps, Scriabin, how central is Russian music to the discipline? I would suggest, following the

logic of Ewell's "analysis" of Schenker, that the study of Russian music and music theory simply be excised from the curriculum.

Let's discuss all this.

Best wishes, Tim

With best wishes,

Tim

On Fri, Nov 15, 2019 at 10:40 AM Walls, Levi <LeviWalls@my.unt.edu> wrote:

I would also be very interested in discussing a particular Schenker paper from SMT. You've likely heard about it, as it caused quite a stir. I was very ambivalent about it because it suggested that analysis that utilizes levels of hierarchy is inherently racist, which strikes me as naive. Reinhold Brinkmann made a very similar claim about Lorenz, saying that his desire to have every part of a piece serve some structural whole was totalitarian (and obviously linking that idea to his political beliefs).

- Levi Walls

From: Walls, Levi
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2019 8:18 AM
To: Timothy Jackson <shermanzelechin@gmail.com>
Subject: Meeting

Dear Dr. Jackson,

Hope you are well! When would you like to get together to talk about Bach? Unfortunately, I haven't had any time to devote to Berlioz lately, as I've been swamped with classes and private teaching. But I would be happy to discuss the Passion in more detail. Of course, you've dedicated considerably more time to it than I have but I can surely follow you and share any thoughts/questions! At the moment, I can't leave Denton Thursday-Sunday because my wife takes the car to work all day. But I can travel Monday-Wednesday, or meet on campus any day.

Regards,

Levi